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Not Yet Post-Cold War Era: A Genealogical Search for the Cold War Discursive Infrastructure in Counter-Jongbuk Surveillance Politics

Minkyu SUNG

Abstract

This study explains how apparatuses of the state-society network have played a significant role in the discursive infrastructure of Cold War politics in South Korea. It argues that the nationwide Candlelight Protests in winter 2016–2017 were not only popular struggles to restore representative democracy, but also calls for critical reflection on the sustained, complex entwinement of voices manufactured from, and negotiated with, the discursive infrastructure of Cold War politics. Sustaining the Cold War discursive infrastructure does not mean the mere revival or re-production of the Cold War mentality, but rather intensifying the hegemonic discourse through a particularly reminiscent set of apparatuses (e.g., pseudo-civic organizations, policy) deployed in the present. From this perspective, I propose that understanding South Korean right-wing groups as a patriotic Korean collective protecting Park Geun-hye from the threat of jongbuk helps us critically engage with the discursive conditions that operate the Cold War mentality of post-Cold War South Korea.

Keywords: Candlelight Protests, state-society networks, pseudo-civic organizations, anti-North Korean ideology, *jongbuk*, Cold War politics

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Introduction

The last quarter of 2016 in South Korea witnessed the Candlelight Protests of more than ten million South Koreans in an outpouring of public fury over government corruption and the country's retreat from democracy demanding then President Park Geun-hye's (2013–2016) immediate removal from office. On December 10, 2016, the day after South Korea's National Assembly approved the impeachment of President Park on charges of extortion, bribery, and abuse of power, angry pro-Park supporters took to the streets of downtown Seoul, calling for her re-instatement. The rally, attended by around 15,000 people, featured leading right-wing conservative activists and speakers, such as Kim Kyeong-jae, then head of the Hanguk Jayu Chongyeonmaeng (Korea Freedom Federation), which is one of the *big three* pseudo-civic (*gwanbyeon*) organizations in the state-society surveillance network, the other two being Bareuge Salgi Undong Jungang Hyeobuihoe (Central Committee of the Right-Way-of-Life Movement) and the Korea Saemaedul (New Village) Movement Center, all run under firm South Korean government tutelage. In his speech addressed to these pro-Park supporters, Kim, a former lawmaker from a major opposition party (with former president Kim Dae-jung) against Park, condemned the overwhelming congressional decision on impeachment by mere suspicion, insisting that “conservative patriots will lose the next presidential election to *jongbuk*¹ (pro-North Korea sympathizers) leftists if they fail to stop the

1. It is ironic that the term *jongbuk* was originally coined not by anti-communist/anti-North Korea groups but by leftist Democratic Labor Party (DLP) leaders who criticized the self-contradictory ideological position on North Korean issues taken by other leaders of the Party in 2001. The *jongbuk* dispute within the party subsequently resulted in the breakup of the DLP due to its failure to reach consensus on such significant issues as North Korean nuclear weapons. The competing views on North Korea within the DLP derived substantially from the debate on democratic politics between the two major college student movement groups of the 1980s and 1990s: National Liberation (Minjok Haebang; NL) and People's Democracy (Minjung Minju; PD). The PD has been highly critical of the NL's favoritism of North Korea in popular nationalism. After the breakup of the DLP, the NL group formed the Unified Progressive Party, which became one of the major targets of counter-*jongbuk* politics during the Park Geun-hye regime, as discussed later in this paper. More recently, South Korean

Constitutional Court finally approving Park's impeachment.” Lee Sang-jin, a representative of another right-wing group, the Bangukga Gyoyuk Cheolpye Gungmin Yeonhap (National Federation for Eradicating Anti-State Student Education), rebuked the demand for a return to representative democracy by a million candlelight protesters, labeling it “a rebellion by mindless *jongbuk* leftists.”² On February 22, 2017, about two weeks before the Constitutional Court's scheduled ruling on Park's impeachment, an image captured by the public Munhwa Broadcasting Company (MBC) at a pro-Park protest in Seoul of a Buddhist monk and two journalists waving a picket saying, “exterminate *jongbuk* supporters” was widely circulated. All of these seemingly provocative messages defending President Park were contrived to address the South Korean public, conveying an implausible connection to an alleged *jongbuk* leftist plot to overthrow liberal democracies.

This state of permanent anti-North Korean crusades is not merely déjà vu of Cold War propaganda or a cruel return the Cold War, but a symbolic sign that Korean society is still deeply embedded in Cold War politics through the discursive infrastructure of state-society surveillance networks. In this paper, “discursive infrastructure” is defined as a set of apparatuses and actors ideologically motivated to act upon each other to construct and maintain the hegemonic status quo and construct political change in a liberal democracy by allowing for the flow of information, ideas, and influence through state-society networks (Parmar 1999). Indeed, a series of political scandals in connection with state-society network erupted when an independent online news agency interviewed a North Korean defector Ham Su-yeon in March 2015 who testified that President Park's close aids in the Blue House and the National Intelligence Service (South Korea's spy

right-wing or conservative groups have employed *jongbuk* in order to antagonistically categorize their political opponents in racist, anti-multicultural, and/or misogynist terms, although many of their opponents are seemingly critical of North Korea or alleged North Korea sympathizers.

2. Jun-ho Bang, “Geugu danche jiphoe, ‘Tanhaek-eun jongbuk jwaik-ui minjung hyeongmyeong’” (“Right-Wing Groups Say, ‘Impeachment Was an Orchestrated Revolt by *jongbuk* Left-Wing Groups’”), *Hankyoreh*, December 10, 2016, http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/774100.html.

agency, hereafter NIS) had directly or indirectly commissioned right-wing civil groups to organize pro-Park campaigns and protests by mobilizing North Korean defectors in return for monetary compensation. At this point, some may wonder how these deplorable connections be still made in shifting discourses from the Cold War to the post-Cold War in South Korea. The explanation will be presented in the next section of this paper by critically reviewing how critical scholarship on anti-North Koreanism responded to the supposedly shifting Orientalist Otherizing discourse on North Korea in a post-Cold War South Korean context.

I argue that the Candlelight Protests across the country in winter 2016–2017 were not only popular struggles to restore representative democracy but also a revolt for critical reflection on the sustained complex entwinement of voices manufactured from, and negotiated with, the discursive infrastructure of Cold War politics. As anthropologist Heonik Kwon (2010, 5) maintains, scholars of the Cold War need to question “the premise and certainty that the end of the cold war is a given reality.” Engaging in this critical reflection, it should be stressed that I am neither simply suggesting that the Cold War invariably, or anachronistically, recurs in South Korean society and there has been no great structural change between the Cold War and the post-Cold War eras, nor implying that the South Korean public has never been marshaled into a new historical phase of political and cultural imagination. Moreover, I do not mean that the South Korean public’s imagination has been helplessly caught up in the Cold War era. Maintaining the Cold War discursive infrastructure does not mean the mere revival or reproduction of the Cold War mentality, but rather refers to the intensification of the hegemonic discourse through a particularly reminiscent set of apparatuses (e.g., pseudo-civic organizations, policy) deployed *in the present*. From this perspective, my suggestion is that understanding those right-wing groups’ identity as a sole patriotic Korean collective protecting Park Geun-hye, a metonymic figure of the state, from the threat of *jongbuk* strongly encourages us to critically investigate the discursive conditions that operate the Cold War mentality in post-Cold War South Korea, which are analogous to historically marked examples from Cold War politics (Medhurst et al. 1997; Robin 2001; Laville and

Wilford 2006; Medhurst 2000; Kwon 2010).

This paper provides a genealogical investigation of the institutions that played an important role in the state-social network in the discourse infrastructure of Korea’s Cold War politics. First, I discuss the implications of what I call the post-Cold War disillusionment, in which a dichotomy between the Cold War and the post-Cold War was problematically invoked in terms of understanding North Korea and anti-North Koreanism in South Korea. This discussion describes the trajectory of this dichotomy as the humanitarian understanding of North Korea began to be affirmed in mediated experiences in South Korea in which the idea of culturally Otherizing North Korea drew attention. I then evaluate a critique of the Otherization discourse caused by policy-driven changes to discuss the efficacy of that critique, which brings its own liabilities that lead to maintaining the dichotomy, for this view fails to provide an adequate account of the continuity of the discursive infrastructure. Second, I show how the Otherization discussion connects us to a historical time when the anomalous characteristics of the North Korean communist species were spawned, penetrating the South Korean public sphere. I use Syngman Rhee’s “One Nation Doctrine” (*ilmin juui*) to critically reflect on anti-North Korean crusades in the Republic of Korea’s (ROK) nation-building. Third, I present examples of the state-society network and a scholarly debate on popular conformism during the Park Chung Hee regime to examine the elaboration of this discursive infrastructure. The major pseudo-civic organizations mentioned above, as well as the scandalous connection involving the NIS, the Korea Federation of Industries (Jeongyeongnyeon; a multi-billionaire business conglomerates’ organization whose members include Samsung and Hyundai Motors), and right-wing civil groups such as the Eobeoi Yeonhap (Korea Parents Federation) are then situated in a broader context of counter-*jongbuk* surveillance politics bound together by genealogical continuity with the vicious Cold War mentality.

The Post-Cold War Disillusionment

With political liberalization since the late 1980s, Koreans began to cast serious doubt on the anti-communist propaganda delivered by military dictatorships until then. This challenge—whose main thrust came from popular nationalist groups' unification campaigns called the Bukhan baro algi undong (Unification Campaigns for Getting to Know North Korea Well)—was made by the use of television and newspaper reports, documentary films, and travelogues about North Korean society to empirically mediate the authentic national characteristics that North Koreans presumably maintained. For example, in Yoo Hong-Joon's (1998) bestselling travelogue, *Na-ui bukhan munhwa yusan dapsagi* (My Travelogue of the Nation's Cultural Heritage in North Korea), King Dongmyeong—the mythic figure who in 37 BC founded the Goguryeo kingdom in the Manchuria region of northeastern China—and his royal tomb, currently located in North Korea, are presented as a locus wherein the authenticity of the nation is defined and at the same time pursued in the name of unification.

The nation's self-respect and self-esteem [one can feel in this heritage site]. . . have presumably enabled us, as descendants of the nation, to perceive ourselves in the spirit of the nation, which has frequently been authentically manifested in our struggle to defend the nation from outside invasion. . . . To educate our descendants about the right perspective on the nation and its authentic spirit, I cannot help feeling that the two Koreas should reunite as soon as possible. (Yoo 1998, 104, 105)

Such mediated experiences appear to convey an imperative of popular nationalism through which a form of greater leverage to challenge anti-North Korean nationalism can be achieved. But this imperative of popular nationalism also needs to be unraveled in terms of its discursive complexity at a time when it began to be embraced with a politics of pity. As painful images of starving North Koreans during the so-called "Arduous March" starting in the early 1990s began to draw the attention

of the South Korean public, the Cold War era's ideological power of anti-North Koreanism reached a critical moment when regulatory adjustments need to be made. This disastrous event in North Korea substantially helped invoke a conciliatory claim to humanitarianism in the formation of national belonging that appeared to contradict the schizophrenic political antagonism toward North Korea. The miserable images of suffering North Koreans were translated into a moral claim to place the "vivid accounts of suffering before the spectator in order to provoke an imaginative identification with the misery of victims" (Rozario 2003, 423). In the meantime, the painful, desperate scenes began strangely to be reified by the commercial take on the North Korean problem.

Consider the South Korean film industry as an example of the outstanding commercialization of humanitarianism. According to the Korean box office records, the top five movies in the history of Korean film industry in December 2005 are about the Korean War, inter-Korean relations, and North Korea were about the Korean War, inter-Korea relations, and North Korea, including *Swiri* (Shiri, 1998), *Gancheop Yi Cheol-jin* (The Spy Lee Cheol-Jin, 1998), and *Gongdong gyeongbi guyeok JSA* (Joint Security Area, 2000) (Kim and Do 2006). The stage for this popular commercial success was set in November 1997 with the historic beginning of South Korea's tourism to the North's famous national park, Geumgangsan mountain. For example, *The Spy Lee Cheol-Jin* brought North Korea into the symbolic terrain of run-of-the-mill reality. The film's portrayal of the spy Lee appears to reverse the stereotype of North Koreans explicitly attributed to the female antagonist in *Shiri* (e.g. a cruelly selfless collectivist in the sense that she betrays her South Korean fiancé because of her ideologically fanatical commitment to the isolated communist dynasty). The North Korean secret agent Lee turns out to be no different than an ordinary South Korean who wants to watch TV, hang out at the mall and museum, and fall in love with a South Korean woman. In these affective politics, however, the South Korean public frequently encounters the idea that a sense of humanitarianism and popular nationalism can keep the Red Scare—manifested as anti-North Korean nationalism—at bay. This notion becomes particularly evident with the belief that any physical contact with

North Korean society can lead the two Koreas to recover the strong ethnic ties of Korean national identity.

Under these post-Cold War circumstances, resonating with Edward Said's critique of the historical-cultural codification of non-Western society as uncivil, exotic, and inferior, Korean critical intellectuals have called for disengagement with the Orientalist objectification of North Korea (M. Kim 1998; N. Lee 2002; Cho-Han and Lee 2000). Indeed, their criticism responds appropriately to how the South Korean public needs to examine the representational features of North Korea in cultural terms. While asserting that the Orientalist discourse can be resolved by creating a public terrain within civil society to counter the unilateral power of the state, their criticism had a tendency to treat the Orientalist representation of North Koreans merely as a *substitute* for Cold-War anti-communism. For example, although Namhee Lee captures the discursive shift of more powerfully programmed anti-North Koreanism with neo-liberalism, she makes the aforementioned contentious substitute claim that, "If anticommunism as a dominant state ideology has waned in its effectiveness and its appeal, largely because of North Korea's economic failures, racist attitudes and Orientalist discourses are *replacing* anticommunism in South Korea" (N. Lee 2002, 60; italics mine).

What I want to tackle in this prominent diagnosis is the way anti-North Koreanism is predicated upon a Cold War and post-Cold War dichotomy. I suggest that the inquiry into a shifting anti-North Korean discourse requires a substantive review of that inquiry's own methodological purchase on the cultural and institutional shift of anti-North Koreanism. First, racially and ethnically contingent claims on the cultural Otherizing of North Korea are found in mediated representations of North Korea by on-site news reporters from South Korea during their visit to Pyongyang in summer 1972 shortly after the historic July 4 North-South Joint Communiqué (Sung 2015). Second, on one hand, the Orientalist critique of anti-North Koreanism aptly makes a critical intervention into how South Korean perceptions and attitudes in the course of pursuing an inter-Korean relationship mimic Western hegemonic culture. On the other hand, the critique is susceptible to the neoliberal

institutionalist idealism that policy reforms for cooperation focused on the state's institutions, together with (non-)state soft-power actors, have the potential to transform world affairs (Stein 2008). A great number of historical, sociological, and anthropological examples demonstrate that the nature of the liberal democratic regime as a particular set of arrangements of heterogeneous state and non-state apparatuses and actors is too diverse to be fundamentally transformed merely through competing policy reforms and values such as human rights and medical humanitarian intervention (Parmar 1999; Moyn 2010; Hopgood 2013; Goodale 2009; Hofman and Au 2017). Understanding the shifting discursive characteristics of anti-North Koreanism in terms of institutional policy changes and modifications can illuminate the critique's baffling position on its own main target of criticism: the Sunshine Policy of the Kim Dae-jung (1998–2002) and Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2007) governments—a policy grounded in neoliberal institutionalist idealism to provide charity subsidies to North Korea, in collaboration with humanitarian NGOs, in the name of inter-Korea cooperation geared toward the nation's unification.³

In short, the Orientalist critique of anti-North Koreanism in South Korea brings its own liabilities by affirming the view that when an institution is conceptualized as a useful tool of social and political reform, policy can become a locus of cultural criticism. Understanding cultural criticism at the policy-making level can overlook the problematic properties and roles of state and non-state networks (and their relationship) aimed at institutionalizing social and political reforms. In the neoliberal institutionalist policy change, the dichotomy of the Cold War and the post-Cold War obscures the genealogical continuity between the two eras, thereby does not provide a proper explanation of the discursive infrastructure of the Cold War in which the ideologically powerful influence of state-society networks through apparatuses is achieved. The next section delineates the genealogical pedigree of the discursive

3. For details of the ROK's North Korea engagement policy and its grounding in neoliberal institutionalism, see Bae and Moon (2014). See also Chubb (2014) regarding the rise of new conservative liberal human rights and humanitarian activism in post-Sunshine Policy South Korea.

infrastructure of Syngman Rhee's anti-North Koreanism crusades through his "One Nation Doctrine."

The Birth of the North Korean Species

The South Korean sociologist Kim Dong-choon (1997, 281) nicely translates anti-North Koreanism into a biopolitics, claiming that anti-North Koreanism has naturalized the violence of the ideological cleansing of communists by rendering them the Other who must be exterminated for national prosperity. Anti-North Koreanism, from the outset of post-liberation Korea, carried a hierarchically ambitious desire toward the Other of North Korea.

Shortly after Korea's 1945 liberation from Japanese colonial occupation (1910–1945), the Korean Peninsula was divided into two sovereign ideological territories along the fault lines of post-WWII geopolitics, generating large-scale political migrations across the peninsula's North-South border, especially to avoid ideological and physical violence and oppression. At this juncture, South Korean society was already facing ideological upheaval involving political violence directed at South Korean civilians as well as between nationalists from the South and the North. One of the largest of such disturbances occurred in April 1948 on the island of Jeju in South Korean territory. The interim government of South Korean leader Syngman Rhee and the US Military Government propagated the incident as a communist/pro-North Korea insurgency. On October 19, 1948, the 14th ROK Regiment, which was embarking for Jeju from Yeosu, Jeollanam-do province, mutinied in an attempt to disrupt Rhee's anti-communist operations on Jeju. Jeju was the first large-scale anti-North Korean political mobilization in post-liberation Korea and followed upon Rhee's assumption of power through a general election held solely in the South on May 26, 1948 and the subsequent foundation of the Republic of Korea on August 15, 1948. Immediately after this so-called Yeosu-Suncheon Rebellion, the Rhee regime began to orchestrate a series of unprecedented large-scale anti-communist campaigns, in coordination

with law enforcement, by helping to organize right-wing, pro-South Korean government vigilante groups such as the Daehan Cheongnyeongdan (Korea Youth League) (D. Kim 2009, 462–479).

The Gungmin Bodo Yeongmaeng (Korean Federation of Protecting and Guiding the Public, KFPGP), established on April 20, 1949, was another example of Rhee's anti-communist/North Korean crusades. Labeled North Korean collaborators and communist sympathizers, its members were considered an aggregate of the political body threatening Rhee's project of building the South Korean nation-state, and thus deserving to be killed. In the dominant political culture of Korea at that time, North Korea or pro-North Korea meant the suspension of one's nationality. Therefore, all political decisions were made in a discursive zone of anomie based on ethnic purity, and only pro-North Korean collaborators were given the right to die. In the catastrophic mass-murder of more than 300,000 former-communist converters by the KFPGP that occurred shortly after the outbreak of the Korean War, anti-communist/anti-North Korea supporters and demagogues labeled these KFPGP converters as (pro-)North Korean.

The KFPGP was a major political apparatus for administering disciplinary mechanisms exterior to South Korea's notorious National Security Law (NSL), which was proclaimed as one of the South's anti-communist policing tools on December 1, 1948. The KFPGP sought to constitute a capillary network of anti-communist/anti-North Korea *jeonhyangja*—those who had converted to the nationalist-cum-capitalist cause—engaged in cultural propaganda activities, such as anti-communist music and theatrical concerts and publications like the weekly magazine *Aegukja* (The Patriot) and the monthly *Changjo* (Creation). The KFPGP also deployed a technology of confessions from converters detailing their regretful communist/pro-North Korea collaboration to enjoin the South Korean public to the anti-communist/pro-North Korea struggle (Kang 2004). Thus, through the rubric of the KFPGP, communists/pro-North Korea collaborators were positioned as a permanent existential threat to the Korean nation.

Syngman Rhee had strenuously emphasized a particular sense of the nation as something "in ... organic and collectivistic terms ... [and] thereby

considered a natural being or fate characterized by shared bloodline and ancestry” (Shin 2006, 102). In his publication *Ilmin gaeron* (Introduction to the One Nation Doctrine), Rhee wrote:

The Korean nation is originally one. We have occupied a common territory; our *Volkgeist* has been within the same imaginary boundary; we have had the same customs and rules in politics and culture; we have not discriminated against one another. In order to build One Nation, we have to eliminate any kind of barriers that block the pathway. Making a contribution to our way of becoming one nation, if you find anything in violation of the principle, you must just throw it away. With any discernible sensibility, we can maintain the ethnically homogeneous body of the nation. Keep this in mind: We can survive when we are together; we will all perish when we are split. We find survival in being one nation. (Rhee 1949, 9–10; author’s translation)

Rhee’s doctrine of the One Nation thrust the South Korean public into his bellicose propaganda of *Bukjin tongillon* (Unification of the Korean Nation through an Uncompromising Military March to the North) by differentiating the nonconciliatory element of communism/pro-North Koreanism from the supposed principle of unifying the nation. This is the rhetorical move that he envisaged in quasi-egalitarian terms as the duty of all South Koreans in his inaugural address of July 24, 1948. In this address, although Rhee’s doctrine of national unification appeared to target North Korean communism’s anti-patriotism rather than communism itself, Rhee’s quasi-liberal principle seems to carve out a figure of the nation as “a new people . . . [who can] make a holy state away from all the old corrupt practices” (as cited in Cumings 1990, 209).

The anti-North Korea thrust of Rhee’s One Nation Doctrine was elaborated upon by his ideologues, such as An Ho-sang and Yi Beom-seok, the first minister of education and the first minister of foreign affairs, respectively, of the Republic of Korea. Although An and Yi asserted that Korean nationalism should never be reconciled with any totalitarian or fascist principle with regard to politics, the economy, or war, as in Hitler’s

Nazism, they insisted that the Korean nation, being synonymous with the new, good citizen of the One Nation Doctrine, must be nurtured with the ethnic notion of pure-bloodedness. For example, in 1947, Yi Beom-seok insisted:

[Commitments to the One Nation Doctrine] are to demonstrate our loyalty to the unbreakable tie with the nation, which operates in our pure bloodline that the Korean nation commands with the utmost solemnity. The nation’s blood! The blood tying fathers and brothers together! . . . This blood is the very beginning and the end, in which we can essentially think of the nation. (Yi 1999, 48; author’s translation)

The One Nation Doctrine, predicated upon the denomination of the Korean nation as a pureblooded race, inscribed communists/pro-North Koreans in the caesura between existence and extermination, which was justified through the mass murder of members of the KFPGP.

In the next section, an analysis of state-society networks during the Park Chung Hee regime elaborates further on how the Cold War discursive infrastructure evolved from the establishment of the ROK. These examples provide evidence of the genealogical continuity of the discursive infrastructure. A scholarly debate on popular conformism under the Park regime is theoretically evaluated to discuss the precariousness and volatility of the discursive infrastructure, in which a revolt against the regime of power cannot be merely viewed as a passive response to change.

The Contentious Space of the Cold War Discursive Infrastructure

State-Society Networks as the Daejung Dokjae

Following Park Chung Hee’s seizure of power through a military coup, his Supreme Council for National Reconstruction declared on May 19, 1961 that the cause of the coup did not simply reference an anti-North Korea security regime but also mobilized the population for the complete

rebuilding of the Korean nation. To facilitate the national mobilization of political dictatorship, the Park regime during the Interim Military Government (1961–1963) helped launch the Jaegeon Gungmin Undong Bonbu (Campaign for National Reconstruction), whose name was changed to the Jaegeon Gungmin Junganghoe (Central Committee of National Reconstruction) in August 1964 soon after the transition from the Interim Military Government to the Third Republic. The Committee was a national civilian organization led by well-known intellectuals, journalists, and educators, such as Yu Jin-O, Yu Dal-Young, Kim Pahl-Bong, and Yi Heongu, who were highly critical of Rhee Syngman's political dictatorship and his militant anti-North Korean imperatives. The national campaign was a political apparatus to set out a political program for economic development through a remodeling of individual souls towards collective cooperation in the name of national prosperity. This resonated with Park Chung Hee's justification for the coup: the total reform of the Korean consciousness that was urgently needed due to society-wide bureaucratic corruption and lack of national self-reliance. In addition, the coup was hailed as an inevitable, promising political shift that would promote economic development by some college student government organizations and many lower-class farmers who had been involved in the rural regional makeover project called the Saemaueul (New Village) Movement. It was also welcomed by some liberal intellectuals then publishing the prestigious scholarly journal *Sasanggye* (World of Thought), which pioneered an adaptation of the concept of social and political mobility under the premise of modernization theory (Hwang 2000, 2004; S. Lee 2007).

Such substantial popular support for the legitimacy of the Park regime's modernization projects indeed gives the strong impression that Park Chung-hee's national development initiatives gained greater effectiveness, up until his assassination on December 12, 1979, than Rhee's aggressive anti-communist national mobilization of the population in the 1950s. In this regard, popular support for the Park regime at the time can be viewed as voluntarism, not as mere conformism. To explain the lethargy of popular resistance to the Park regime, the idea of *daejung dokjae* (mass dictatorship) is often put forward, especially as a way of understanding

the "*minjung* movement"⁴ role in sustaining the regime (Im 1999, 2000, 2001, 2006; Im and Lee 2005). The idea of *daejung dokjae* implies that Park's political dictatorship was the very outcome of popular consent to these schemes of political, economic, and cultural modernization. The *daejung dokjae* thesis presents the numerical decrease in large-scale or mass political protests against the Park regime as evidence of popular conformism to state violence and economic exploitation,⁵ making a link to the German population's seeming comprehensive support for Hitler's Nazi regime during World War II (Hwang 2000, 49–50).

The *daejung dokjae* thesis makes it clear that the normalization of society geared toward the mobilization of the national population for economic development became possible when anti-North Koreanism concealed its regulatory, violent tactics within a popular formation of the nation. For example, from the time the Saemaueul Movement was launched in 1972, it successfully organized training camps until 1979, attracting more than 680,000 local leaders who were able to help people effectively undertake a diverse range of reform projects in agricultural, industry, and urban modernization. The Saemaueul Movement was successful, appealing to the idea that the nation's destiny could not be secured simply through the reckless anti-communist propaganda the South Korean public experienced during the Rhee regime. The Park regime instead propagated the idea that the nation's prosperity had to be measured in economic terms, which in turn should be suited to the cultivation of an enthusiasm for "good nationalism" in an effort to defeat North Korea (Hwang 2000, 62–63). This is the backdrop against which the critique of popular conformism to political dictatorship becomes highly skeptical about the analytic binarism of "dominance versus resistance" developed by South Korean Marxian democratic social movement scholarship. In their debate over the extent to which the *minjung* made a substantial challenge to the Park regime

4. The *minjung* refers to the formation of South Korean universal political subjectivity across different lines of socio-economic interest under societal oppression (N. Lee 2007).

5. For example, capital losses from the labor strike in South Korea from 1971 to 1980 totaled only 4,000 hours of labor production, compared to other Third World countries like the Philippines, which lost about 50,000 hours during the same period (Hwang 2000, 49–50).

(e.g., Cho 2004; Im and Lee 2005), proponents of the *daejung dokjae* thesis claim that the preoccupation with the concept of resistance obscures the sustaining tactics of political dictatorship that penetrated social life.

Although there should be a sophisticated framework to explain the success of these political tactics in the public realm, I suggest that the *daejung dokjae* thesis' strategy of dismantling the ambivalent characters of conformism and resistance in popular conduct still relies on the schematic division of dominant and subordinate cultural politics that the strategy ostensibly targets. First of all, Im Ji-Hyun contends that:

If one considers the discursive terrain of the *minjung* movements as *ceaselessly nomadic space*, the simple dichotomy of conformism and resistance of the *minjung* cannot appropriately be constructed to explain the complicated mechanism of *everyday fascism*. (Im 2001, 84; author's translation and emphasis)

Here, Im (2001, 44) does not unpack the daunting conceptualization of "everyday fascism," but with that concept, he wants to point to "the internalization of totalitarian discourses" within popular formations. If so, How was it possible for the people to deliberately join political dictatorship? It operates because social democratic practices are never fixed as counter-hegemonic, but instead are exercised through negotiation. Admittedly, the idea of *daejung dokjae* is predicated on the notion of hegemony to illuminate the interplay of resistance and conformism in terms of negotiating their material and ideological forces, paying more attention to the psychological mechanism of consent production (Bennett 1998, 69).

More theoretically, in the view of the *daejung dokjae* thesis, the discursive space of "ceaselessly nomadic movements" by the people is less concerned with how culture works in the exercise of power and organization of the relationship between individuals and cultural resources (e.g. the Saemaoul Movement) than with the reasons why a certain type of social relationship (e.g. the dichotomy between state power and the subordinate people) is maintained (Bennett 1998, 69–70). The possessive conception of power makes a presumptive claim that social relations

created in the circularity of power relations end up being reduced to the function of state power. The *daejung dokjae* thesis crumbles in such a reductive fashion, drawing on the reproduction of dominant totalitarian codes in the popular realm, because it concludes that the negotiational capacity of the people is likely to only be conceivable within the scope of the state (or dominant) power:

The critical demands for abandonment of totalitarian cultural norms are consistently managed by the reproduction of everyday life as a "structured structure." . . . A challenge to the reproduction of emancipatory life . . . should be viewed in questioning everyday fascism. [In other words,] this task can be achieved through the investigation of the reproduction of everyday life repeated by the dominant codes [operated by state power]. (Im 2001, 75–76; author's translation)

First, this theoretical ambivalence leads to a bold historical investigation with many theoretical tools to explain the reproduction of anti-North Koreanism under the purview of the authoritarian state. The elliptical stress on popular obedience is bound to imagine an authoritarian oppressive political regime in which the social and political conformism of the Minjung is inherently *pre-given* (Cho 2005, 319–320). At this point, it is worth underscoring Edward Palmer Thompson's (1963, 49) remark that "Although historians and sociologists have recently given more attention to millennial [sic] movements and fantasies, their significance has been partly obscured by the tendency to discuss them in terms of maladjustment and 'paranoia.'" Furthermore, the analysis of the dominant modes thus needs to dissolve its oversimplified historicalism, which identifies the period of the Park regime with Nazism (Jang 2004). Second, the *daejung dokjae* thesis' call for the reproduction of "popular consent from below" in political dictatorship is far from analyzing tactics that normalize the discursive combination of popular nationalism and anti-North Koreanism adapted to economic developmentalism. The Park regime devised the national campaign of the Saemaoul Movement for the sake of exploiting local communities under the scheme of industrialization. The original idea

of the national campaign came paradoxically from North Korea. While pitting the South Korea population against its North Korean counterpart, Park Chung Hee was emulating Kim Il Sung (and presumably vice versa), because Park knew how the Kim regime had been promptly revitalized after the Korean War in a collectivist scheme of political mobilization.

Indeed, the the problem of nationalism, which is vulnerable to political mobilization, is clearly the main target of analysis in the *daejung dokjae* thesis. And no one seems to disagree that the success of the Saemaeul Movement stemmed from the deployment of a nationalism particularly suited to the tactic against North Korea (Cho 2005). However, in order to explain the “political silence from below” during the Park regime, the thesis identifies nationalism as an expression of statism that reduces the political behavior of the people as a result of the political and bureaucratic power of the state—i.e. the claim that the Korean people’s public conformity can be substantiated by the success of the Saemaeul Movement (Im and Lee 2005). In this schematization, no one but the state is allowed to imagine the political community of the country. This shows the primary feature of Park Chung Hee’s anti-North Korean nationalism as a manipulative and top-down political technique. The thesis thus considers popular conformity to be a mere ideological effect of anti-North Korea nationalism.

Accordingly, within the *daejung dokjae* thesis, as the state is conceptualized as the only entity that can imagine the nation, the scope of determining political action is constrained (or even always subject) to the function of the state. This implies that the thesis gives the discursive combination of anti-North Koreanism and nationalism a static, homogeneous character, as there would be no negotiation between the state and the South Korean public in the deployment of the Cold War discursive infrastructure.

Counter-Jongbuk Surveillance in Defense of Liberal Democracy

A critical discussion of the *daejung dokjae* thesis is still important, especially in that such state-society networks have continued to play pivotal roles in maintaining the Cold War discursive infrastructure since

South Korea’s political liberalization in the late 1980s. As in the *daejung dokjae* thesis, however, the state-society networks in post-Park Chung Hee South Korea are hard to explain with a statist approach. State-centered theories have a strong tendency to oversimplify the relationship between state and society and argues that, as apparatuses of the networks, pro-government civic organizations are merely subjugated to the state with the most powerful force in the public domain. As described below, although right-wing pseudo-civic organizations have been highly dependent on government subsidies, they function as *reservoirs of legitimacy* from which the state (and local governments) can secure and exercise popular authority (Parmar 2006, 14). But it should also be noted that the discussion of those pseudo-civic organizations does not validate the legitimacy of policy-driven cultural criticism, as in the Orientalist critique of North Korea, but aims to show how those organizations were still embedded in the Cold War discursive infrastructure. The Cold War, as a historical bloc, may not be relegated merely to the political exteriority of legal and institutional reforms.

Amid the global economic stagnation and energy crisis of the early 1970s, one of the *big three* pseudo-civic organizations for state-society surveillance networks, Jaegeon Gungmin Junganghoe (Central Committee of National Reconstruction), merged into the Korea Saemaeul Movement Center in 1972. Currently claiming a membership of two million, with 30,000 committed local leaders, the Saemaeul Movement Center still has a powerful ideological influence on the permeation of Park Chung Hee’s militant anti-communist economic developmentalism in rural, local communities. Another *big three* organization, Hanguk Jayu Chongyeonmaeng (Korea Freedom Federation), which began as the Asia Bangong Yeonmaeng (Asia Anti-Communism Federation) initiated by President Rhee in 1954, boasts a membership of 3.5 million and claims to be the last bastion of anti-communism and liberal democracy inherited from “Rhee Syngman’s state-building spirit,” according to its homepage.⁶

6. “Yeonhyeok” (History of the Korea Freedom Federation), Korea Freedom Federation, accessed November 10, 2018, <https://www.koreaff.or.kr/home/kff.html?code=intro04>.

Established in 1989 under special legislation passed in a rush (*nalchigi tonggwa*) in the National Assembly by the then ruling party for the Roh Tae-woo regime (1988–1993), the Central Committee of the Right-Way-of-Life Movement built upon the atrocious Sahoe Jeonghwa Wiwonhoe (Social Purification Committee) under Chun Doo-hwan—who seized power in 1980 shortly after the assassination of Park Chung Hee—for the purpose of purifying the nation’s corrupted souls and eliminating social ills. The organization attracts about 700,000 members across South Korea.

Sharing a strong commitment to both anti-North Koreanism and liberal democracy, each of these big three conservative, pro-government organizations was established by its own special legislation during the authoritarian era and was continuously subsidized by Rhee and subsequent military dictators. Many expected that the organizations’ pseudo-civic character and privileged access to government resources and budgets would be curtailed or terminated when the Support of Nonprofit Civic Organizations Legislation was passed and enacted in 2000 under the liberal-left president Kim Dae-jung, who was arguably aware of the ideological influence of their intertwined networks on the military dictatorship legacy. Indeed, their protracted privileged government subsidies were discontinued under the legislation with the aim of promoting merit-based and equal-subsidy opportunities for the public good that would help usher in an era of active participation by civic organizations in democratic governance. But President Kim’s move also needs to be understood as an attempt at political leverage for popular support by extending a regular government subsidy to liberal-left civic unions, because he was unable to restrain the ideological influence of those pseudo-civic right-wing organizations in his reform agenda.

In spite of the effort to reform state-society networks, the big three organizations received a total of ₩7.4 billion in local subsidies for 10 years from 2000 to 2010, which amounted to 11 percent of the total of local government budgets allotted for civic organizations nationwide (Jwa 2011, 230). Furthermore, once the conservative Lee Myung-bak came to power in 2008, the direct subsidy program for civic organizations resumed in hopes it would garner support for Lee’s extremely controversial policies,

including the Four Major Rivers Project (Sadaegang Saeop). In 2010, the aforementioned big three organizations received a total of ₩4 billion in subsidies, some 80 percent of the total subsidies allocated to all civic organizations nationwide by the Lee administration (Jwa 2011, 231). The strengthening of state-society networks inexorably increased during the conservative Park Geun-hye presidency. The big three organizations received a total of ₩26.7 billion in subsidies from local governments in 2013, Park’s first year in office.⁷ In 2015, the total amount of subsidies doled out by local governments to those three organizations dramatically increased to ₩50 billion.⁸

These conservative Lee and Park governments continued the established trend of concatenating “national security” (*anbo*) and the “nation’s advanced moral spirit” (*gungmin uisik seonjinhwa*) to reinforce state-society networks through pseudo-civic organizations. Especially after the two serious inter-Korea military conflicts of the sinking of the ROK corvette Cheonan (allegedly by a North Korean torpedo) in March 2010 and the bombardment of Yeonpyeong-do island by North Korean artillery in November 2010, pseudo-civic organizations played a leading role in organizing large-scale mass protests against *jongbuk* supporters in downtown Seoul on August 15, 2010. In 2013, Lee Seok-gi, a lawmaker from the leftist-popular nationalist Tonghap Jinbodang (Unified Progressive Party), was arrested on charges of plotting a pro-North Korea rebellion to overthrow South Korea’s liberal democracy, for which he was sentenced to 12 years in prison in February 2014. Subsequently, on December 19, 2014, the Constitutional Court made a landmark decision of 8 to 1 in favor of the dissolution of the Unified Progressive Party due to its alleged pro-North

7. *Jugwon bangsong* (Sovereignty Broadcast), “Talbukja jeungeon 1: Talbukja danche-ga Gukjeongwon jageum-euro unyeong doeetda” (North Korean Defector Witness 1: Defector-Activist Groups Operated with the Financial Support of the NIS), *Jugwon bangsong*, March 23, 2015, <http://www.615tv.net/?p=423>.

8. Hee-sang Jeong, “Chin jeongbu jiphoe apjangseon bosu danche-ui segeum baejeong hyeonhwang” (State of Taxpayer Monies Spent on Pro-Government Conservative Civil Organizations), *Sisa IN*, May 3, 2016, <http://www.sisain.co.kr/?mod=news&act=articleView&idno=25926>.

Korea views.

Soon after Park Geun-hye's impeachment, those involved were indicted by the Seoul Central Prosecutor's Office on charges of illegal covert activities to orchestrate *jongbuk* crusades. They were former chiefs of staff in the Blue House, high-profile agents and former directors of the NIS, right-wing activists from pseudo-civic organizations such as the Korea Parents Federation, and the vice president of the Korea Federation of Industries who had subsidized those right-wing groups. These unlawful operations had blacklisted hundreds of anti-Lee and anti-Park activists and celebrities from popular entertainment, the arts, filmmaking, and so on, banning them from receiving government funding, while right-wing pseudo-civic organizations were *whitelisted* and privileged for government funding, as discussed above.

In this self-contradictory liberal democratic scheme, an individual's *advanced moral spirit* must always be externally directed by anti-North Korean surveillance forces. As Korean historian Han Hong-koo (2017) and legal scholar Han Sang-hee (2017) illuminate, the Cold War discursive infrastructure features the historical bloc of *gongan* (public safety), consisting of the police, prosecutors, technocrats, the military, NIS, government bureaucrats, business moguls, intellectuals, the NSL, and others promoting *jongbuk* surveillance politics. But it also demonstrates that the apparatuses of state-society networks have been not merely supplementary but central to the sustenance of *gongan*. The deconstruction of the idea of *gongan* may not be possible solely through institutional or legal reforms, but it can be effectuated by paying attention to those heterogeneous discursive and material networks that justify and contest *jongbuk* surveillance politics.

Conclusion

On February 26, 2017, approximately 3,000 protesters, most in their sixties or older, swarmed onto Central Boulevard (Jungang-ro) in downtown Daegu. They cried out in favor of Park's presidency, strengthening the

ROK-US blood alliance, and exterminating anti-Park, *jongbuk* supporters. Fluttering in the hands of these pro-Park Geun-hye supporters were pictures of Park Chung Hee, Korean national flags (Taegukgi), and US flags, all of which appeared to symbolically convey an everyday repetitive and subliminal, to borrow Michael Billig's (1995) term, "banal" message representing the ROK's nation-building and the nation's post-Korean War economic development. In these pro-Park supporters' synecdochical sense of nationhood, Syngman Rhee is touted as the founding father of the country and Park Chung Hee is incarnated as the sole architect of the country's compressed modernization—its miraculously rapid emergence from the Korean War through the 1960s and 1970s to economic recovery and prosperity. Moreover, the United States is hailed as the glorious and truthful savior of the Korean nation from Cold War communist threats from the birth of the ROK all the way through the country's present domestic and regional security crises.

This bizarre set of identities strongly appeals to the self-consciousness of the aged citizen protesters who believe they are completely ignored by the younger generation. They think that the younger generations have never experienced war or sacrificed their entire lives for family and country (Choi 2016). In their view, since South Korea's political liberalization in the late 1980s, the corrupt democratic aspirations of South Korea's younger generations arose due to the complete misapprehension of political leaders cultivated through the pro-North/communist history curriculum in middle and high schools. Accordingly, the sense of deprivation in the demonstrations of the elderly has emerged as an object of identification and opposition/division. Kenneth Burke (1969, 22) reminds us that, "Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division." The identification of these pro-Park supporters points to the displaced object of opposition/division that will lead to compensation for their sacrifice and frustration, as evidenced by their chant, "Exterminate *jongbuk* supporters." In other words, this *jongbuk* rhetoric is employed to justify the above identification in the displacement of their deprivation. The identification is only programmed to conceal the historical facts that the corrupt and oppressive

Syngman Rhee government was overthrown by the democratic forces of the April 19 Uprising, the twenty-year Park Chung Hee dictatorship came to an end when Park was assassinated by an outraged aid on October 26, 1979 amid increasing anti-Park popular struggles, and that the US's hegemonic internationalism should be considered responsible to the South Korean public and the East Asia region for these Cold War legacies.

I suggest that the sense of deprivation of right-wing groups, which provides a powerful *pathos* that persuades them to act only for themselves, is not merely symptomatic of social alienation from social mobility, family, and community. It also reveals that their hostility is deeply embedded in, and persistently sustained by, the Cold War discursive infrastructure, as demonstrated in this essay.

The 2016–2017 Candlelight Protests and the subsequent power transition to the liberal-left Moon Jae-in administration offer a crucial opportunity to critically reflect on the Cold War discursive infrastructure. The candlelight vigil demonstrated once again that the Korean public's aspirations to a democratic society are not completely suppressed or overwhelmed by a Cold War discursive infrastructure. But it is also worth stressing that while the failed ethos of those right-wing groups as fixtures of the liberal democratic establishment was unveiled, the workings of counter-*jongbuk* surveillance politics through the state-society network (e.g., countrywide large-scale pro-Park "Taegukgi rally") testify to the permeation of insidiously mutating *jongbuk* propaganda through those apparatuses operating in rhetorical alliances with racism, misogyny, and homophobia. Under the conservative Lee and Park governments, the North Korean defectors mobilized at the stage of joint participation of the of the state-society network became another collective being converted to the liberal democratic cause of counter-*jongbuk*. If the Moon administration is haunted by leveraging apparatuses (i.e., non-state or para-state institutions, policymakers, civil unions) of state-society networks for the legitimacy of the administration's popular authority, the rhetorical invention of another mere collective being will have to be fanatically consumed and brutally sacrificed to address the South Korean public.

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